

THIS evening a specially chartered ship leaves Tisbury for Leningrad carrying the costumes and scenery for the Sadler's Wells Ballet, due to open at the Bolshoi Theatre on November 15.

The work of preparing and packing the costumes for thirteen full-length ballets has fallen upon Miss Cranmer, the efficient and much-loved wardrobe mistress at Covent Garden. When I called on her this week I found her looking remarkably unruined for a person who had just packed £240,000 worth of clothes.

These range from such everyday costumes as "twelve wives, twelve princesses and eight white guards" copied from Gontcharova's original designs for "The Firebird" to the brilliant yellow and gold dress which Fonteyn will wear for the first-night performance of "Birthday Offering."

It has taken Miss Cranmer and her assistants five months to make the 970 separate costumes, and many days to supervise their packing under the stern gaze of a customs officer whose duty it was to fix his seal to every crate.

Silks of Moscow

Miss Cranmer was enthusiastic about her opposite number with the Bolshoi Ballet, Madame Golovina.

"Of course, things are a little easier for them. The Bolshoi shuts down completely for sixty days each year, whereas we always have something on."

"They make their costumes out of completely different materials from ours—no nylon or rayon, but the most lovely pure silks, perfect ballistic material, like the stuff Eastern women use for saris."

A Day to Remember

WELL, well! Competing against eleven nations in the Frankfurt International

Cookery Competition, four English chefs have won the highest awards of four gold medals, a Grand Prix in gold and a silver platter as a further prize of honour.

The team consisted of Arthur Hope, chef-de-cuisine, Euston Hotel, London; Leonard Nice, chef-instructor, Portsmouth College of Technology; Eric Morrell, chef-de-cuisine, the Devonshire Club, London; and John Potterton, chef-confec-tioner to Kunties, the chocolate firm in Birmingham.

The heroes took with them four young catering students from Battersea Polytechnic who, in a junior competition against sixteen nations, acquitted themselves with such distinction that a special silver plaque was struck and presented to them. Furthermore, one of the students, twenty-year-old D. C. Priddy, won a £260 prize for the most outstanding dish entered by any officer whose duty it was to fix his seal to every crate.

Grouse Supreme

Drama surrounded the spectacular British victory. When the diffident English chefs laid out their raw ingredients one French competitor sneered "Are they going to cook it?" Unmoved, the Englishmen proceeded to cook in full view of the public, 200 steak-and-kidney puddings, 250 roast Aylesbury ducklings, 200 portions of boiled beef, carrots and dumplings and 150 roast grouse.

Gingerly the experts tasted and then, with cries of ecstasy, incontinently devoured every morsel, first of the steak-and-kidney puddings, then of the ducklings and finally of the roast grouse which even the French master chefs voted sensationelle. (Our roast grouse

became the most talked-of national dish at the exhibition.)

Let the world, for so long critical of English cooking, put this historic paragraph in its pipe and smoke it.

True Life Story

HOW Rider Haggard would have revelled in the stealthy battle between the pseudo gangs and Dedan Kemathi, the Mau Mau leader!

Ian Henderson, both in name, extreme good looks and George Medal and bar, is cut out for a Haggard hero, and the insolent, keen-eyed, bearded native in his leopard-skin disguise, half man half animal, with almost

supernatural powers of survival, would have been a superb fictional villain.

True life has left out only the beautiful heroine held captive by the leopard man. But Mrs. Henderson, with her small daughter, has been safe in her suburban villa in Nairobi.

It was not Henderson who finally brought down Kemathi, but he was the inspiration of the pseudo gangs and he did, in fact, get a shot at Kemathi at the end of July, and missed.

Sunny Egypt

AN extra skin or two must almost be a professional necessity for a tourist attaché, but during the last few months

nobody can have envied Mr. Khalid Azmy the lonely luxury of his brand-new office in Piccadilly.

For Mr. Azmy is the director of the Egyptian State Tourist Office in London.

Still, when I met him last week, he showed no dissatisfaction with his lot. Yes, he admitted slightly wistfully, this was the time of the year when most British tourists would be setting off for Egypt.

No, he did not know how many British visitors had cancelled their trips, but certainly they might be having trouble with their visas, which had to be authorised from Cairo, and they might have some difficulty

cashing their travellers' cheques when they got there.

Such a Pity

It was such a pity, especially as the Egyptian Government was taking so much trouble to make Egypt attractive to the tourists.

Practically all customs restrictions had been relaxed for foreign visitors and they could gamble all day and drink all night. There were cheap all-in-rates on the railways, the dragomen were rigorously controlled by the tourist police. Shepherds had been rebuilt.

As additional argument Mr. Azmy showed me some of his travel-leaflets. There was "Egypt, an Ancient World for a Modern Holiday," "Fayoum, Love the Nest of the Pharaohs," and another showing the military cemetery at El Alamain headed "Ala meim! What memories are conjured up by this name."

It was all such a pity, this present trouble, said Mr. Azmy.

TeleroPhonics

HOLLYWOOD'S Oscar seems to have set a tradition that all statues awarded in the entertainment world should look as though they have been squeezed out of a piece of old soap.

Mrs. Mizzi Cunliffe, who designed the trophies to be presented tomorrow at the Savoy Hotel by Dame Edith Evans, when the Guild of Television Producers holds its annual ball, most successfully evades the old formula.

Six bronze "Jascons" are awarded every year as the result of a secret ballot among working producers. For the first time the ballot will cover both B.B.C. and Commercial television. They go to the year's outstanding actor, actress, script, scenery, personality and production.

Last year the B.B.C. had the field to itself. Virginia McKenna was crowned for her Juliet, and Peter Cushing for his part in "1984." Glyn Daniel became the year's personality, and the envied position of producers'

producer was won by Gill Calder for "The Unloved."

Maurice Wiggin tips Rudolph Cartier for the producer's trophy for his "Saint of Spleeker Street" and Lieutenant Sir Brian Horrocks as the year's personality.

"Amepnka"

THANKS to the invariably helpful library at the American Embassy, I have one of the few copies of "Amepnka" outside Russia. This is the United States Government-sponsored magazine which appeared last Monday on the streets of Moscow and immediately sold out.

Of "Life" size format, luxuriously produced, with excellent photographs and handsome colour reproductions, the adroit propaganda is irresistibly packaged. At five roubles for sixty lustrous pages it should be a wonderful buy for a Muscovite.

Gleaming farm equipment, motor cars and machinery vie with Walt Disney, ballet, and ingeniously dowdy women's fashions. All that is missing is some of those luscious food

advertisements that were favourite pin-ups in English school dormitories during the hungry war years.

The picture of America which emerges from "Amepnka" is of an earnest, pioneering, peace-loving coun-



Cover of "AMEPNKA"

try—not so very different from Russia, but with a considerable edge on her.

Ahem!

I REPEAT, sit comfortably and in a relaxed position. Hold the wheel at a quarter to three...

("How To Handle A Sports Car," by Stirling Moss, "Bognor Herald Observer," October 19, 1956.)

... the cradle will Rock!

SORRY, but Children's Hour is cancelled. Do not be angry, children, that you have to go to sleep tonight without your bed-time stories. (Budapest Radio at the height of Wednesday's revolt.)